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LIVELIHOOD IN SILWA

the winter crop or summer crop respectively. The villagers depend mainly on a kind of clay (nitrous soil) brought from the eastern cliffs as fertilizer, called 'marog'. On camel- or donkey-back it is brought to the fields after a journey of approximately six miles which takes about four hours there and back. The saline properties of 'marog' are recognized by colour and taste. In addition, pigeon and chicken droppings, soil impregnated with stable-dung, and oven-ashes are also used to supplement the 'marog'. Chemical fertilizers are used by only very few people who have neither animals nor children to bring the 'marog', or by those who have so much land for which they could not possibly collect all the required 'marog', and hence have to supplement it by chemical fertilizer. Chemical fertilizer is usually preferred to nitrous clay for the cultivation of cash crops, sugar-cane and cotton, the area of which does not exceed thirty acres for the whole village.

With the help of my informant, Ali, I have tried to calculate the amount of time needed for the entire process of cultivation of both the winter and summer crops. It is obvious that such a task is a somewhat complicated one. However, we took the feddan as the functional unit of measurement and had to assume certain criteria for the labour in the farm unit. We had to answer questions such as: How many hours does a farmer work in the field in a day or during different periods of work? To what extent is the difference in output affected by physical conditions? What tools, implements and animals do we assume to be owned by the farmer for our calculations? How many children are assumed to be working on the farm, and what age groups are represented? However, we agreed to take a family, composed of a father, having two children, aged eight and thirteen, owning a camel, and working on an acre as the basis of our calculations. This unit was not entirely arbitrary, as the average size of the family unit is between five and six persons. To include two boys in such a family is not beyond the law of probability. The age represents one child under compulsory schooling, helping his father in the afternoon, while the other boy has just left school on reaching adolescence, when he can be relied upon to bring the fertilizer from the hill. The camel has been chosen as the median unit for the animal contribution to the farm work. It is true that not every farmer owns a camel, but alternatively he might well have a donkey to bring fertilizer and a cow for ploughing. In this case, he could lend his cow for ploughing to a farmer having a camel, and ask him in return for his camel to help him bringing extra fertilizer. One farmer may possess a plough and a donkey, and thus he can get extra help in conveying fertilizer by lending his plough. If a farmer has a third boy he could send him to help in working with another farmer in return for some needed help. However, every farmer possesses a donkey or a camel for loading as a necessary productive agent in agriculture. Thus the writer feels that the unit chosen is a feasible productive unit, representing the average working conditions.

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LIVELIHOOD IN SILWA

FROM SEVEN TO TWELVE[1]

[Boys] [GIRLS] 857

Before the introduction of compulsory schooling and perennial irrigation, the specific responsibility for this period was irrigation—he still helps with it in the afternoon.

Collects leaves, clover, grass, and weeds for feeding the animals, takes animals to water, as tending animals is his main responsibility, whether at home or in the field.

Fetches drinking water on donkey-back.

Helps in harvesting.

Helps in digging land, breaking up clods with the hoe as an introduction to his use of implements.

Takes out and leads his blind or old father or grandfather.

Takes corn on donkey-back to the mill to be ground.

Tasks of previous period if no younger sibling in the family.

Establishment of tasks of preceding period, and helping mother in food preparation.

Fetches water from the Nile in a larger jar, as towards end of this period she can balance the filled jar on head without support of hands. [312] [482] [23]

Takes midday meal to the field, and brings home dates and vegetables.

Helps mother in attending to poultry and sheep, searches for straying sheep or chicken outside. [23]

Daughters of widowed women, or men who are not actually engaged in farming, gather fuel from along the roads. [8] [31]

Brings home 'clay' from the Nile or the field to help mother in building or repairing the oven, the pigeon-cote, the fireplace and the earthen store for seeds.

Carries corn on her head to the mill. [482]

FROM TWELVE TO SIXTEEN

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Fertilizer-fetching is the main responsibility. Father is responsible for the work on the land, while son is responsible for carrying fertilizer from the hill.

Rears with special attention animals allocated to him: calf, small camel . . . as an investment for his marriage-payment.

Makes ropes by twisting fibre of the palm trunk.

'Sea' is one of her main responsibilities, which means water-fetching from Nile mainly at night. [24]

Occasionally takes women's washing as well as her own to be washed in the Nile [296] [231]

Sieves flour, sews and cooks.

Heats the oven, kneads and bakes. [422]

Hair-delousing. [515]

Wool spinning and yarning.

Makes plate and dish covers out of palm leaves, and dolls to ornament her future house. [283] [285]

Errand-going decreases to the minimum.

May get married before sixteen. [582]

[1] This is the period where compulsory schooling has interfered with the traditional activities of children. 871

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children and adults have their feet firmly established on the ground, and fancies of imagination are neither encouraged nor desirable.

My informant, Ali, told me a point which is relevant to this question of imagination. He said that one should not think in terms of 'if' or 'as if', as according to the prophetic tradition, ' "if" opens the path for the Devil's advance'. It is also interesting to mention that the classical Arabic word for imagination (khayal) is used in the village to denote 'shadow', and does not refer to a mental process, except, of course, to some literate persons. This does not mean that some children are not imaginative, and they are recognized by other children who may sometimes sneer at them by asking them to relate some of their fantasies (literally pinches). Children would tell you that such flights of fancy run through certain families. Adults, however, do not expect children to use, much less exercise or enrich, their imagination as this would hamper their social and economic maturity.

In discussing the formal educational institutions in the village at the present time, the Kuttab comes first in importance, as it is the indigenous school for memorizing the Koran. The word 'Kuttab' is an old Arabic word, connected in its etymological derivation with the word 'kitab' (book), being the place where the Holy Book is learnt. The educational ideals and methods of this institution are mainly influenced by the Islamic tradition of learning, an example of which is the advice given by the Caliph Harun al Rashid to al-Ahmar, the tutor of his son, al-Amin, in which he said: 'O, Ahmar, I have given you the child of my blood, the fruit of my loins, and given you power over him, and made him obedient to you; therefore prove worthy of this position. Teach him the Koran, History, Poetry, Traditions, and appreciation of eloquence. Prevent him from laughing except on proper occasions. Accustom him to respect the Sheikhs of the Hashimite family, and to offer a place to the military commanders if they attend to his council. . . . Do not be too kind to him, or he will take to idleness. Improve him kindly, but if that will not suffice, you can treat him harshly.'[1]

Another example would also serve to illustrate the content and method of Islamic education. This is taken from the instructions given by 'Amr Ibn 'Utbah to the tutor of his sons: 'My sons will be deeply influenced by you: favour what you do, and abhor what you avoid. Teach them the Koran, but without wearying them of it, recite to them what is good in traditions, and chaste in poetry. . . . Teach them the virtues of wise men, and keep them away from women's conversation.'[2] Whether with private

content and of 'perspective' in technique; with persons walking sideways in the ancient Egyptian tradition of drawing.

For similar results about free drawings, see Margaret Mead, *Growing up in New Guinea*, p. 18.

[1] A. Ibn Khaldoun, *al-Mukladdimah*, Cairo, p. 399 (Arabic).

[2] A. Shalaby, 'History of Moslem Education' (Ph.D. Thesis, unpublished, Cambridge University, 1950).

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INDIGENOUS LEARNING AND TEACHING

tutors or in the Kuttab, the most important content in learning is the memorizing of the Koran as the basis of all other knowledge. The Kuttab has been, and is still in many remote villages in Aswan, the institution for religious learning, in which children learn part or the whole of the Koran, to be able to use this knowledge for their recitation and prayers, and the observation of correct ritual and prayer. The learning of reading and writing was always secondary to this all-important aim.

During the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries a great number of Kuttabs were financed by the revenue derived from charitable foundations called 'Wakfs'.[1] It was not until 1906 that these schools felt the impact of the central Government authority. In that year the Kuttab was organized, and a system of inspection and awards was worked out in accordance with which Kuttabs satisfying the official requirements could avail themselves of it. The aid was dependent upon daily instruction in the three R's, together with religious teaching, combined with a report of the Ministry of Education Inspector as to the general conditions of the Kuttab.[2] Later on, private awards were given to those boys who could satisfy the Inspector in an oral examination that they had learnt all the Koran by heart.

In Silwa and its neighbouring villages, there is only one aided 'Maktab', which is the official name for a recognized Kuttab, besides the other five unrecognized Kuttabs.[3] It is significant to note that four out of the six Kuttabs are attached to, or situated very near, a mosque, and the fifth is adjacent, and connected with a clan's guest house. Apart from the obvious connection between the mosque and religious learning in the Kuttab, such a proximity between the Kuttab, the mosque and the clan guest house enables the Kuttab boys to fetch water from the wells of the mosque or the clan guest house to be used for drinking, or for cleaning their wooden tablets. Out of the six Sheikhs running the Kuttabs in Silwa, three are blind. The Kuttab building usually consists of two rooms, with a raised dais in each room for the Sheikh. There is hardly any equipment, except the Sheikh's prayer mat, and the wooden tablets on which the boys write their Koranic assignment. The aided Kuttab is, however, an exception, as it has wooden seats, desks, and a blackboard, and is whitewashed. All the Kuttabs, except the aided one, are confined to boys. Only recently have some girls begun to attend the aided Kuttab, as attendance at it exempts both boys and girls from going to the compulsory school. In fact, throughout the history of Moslem Egypt the keenness on teaching girls the Koran has never been so strong as in the case of boys. MacDonald mentioned, however, that there are records of

[1] J. Hayworth-Dunne, *An Introduction to the History of Education in Modern Egypt*.
[2] Ministry of Education, *Code of Regulations Relating to Grants-in-Aid to Kuttabs*, No. 1181, May 1906.
[3] The Kuttab is usually referred to in Silwa by the name Khalwa—a word which literally means 'an isolated place for worship'.

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'mulids', weddings and funerals. They are never addressed without the prefix of 'Sheikh'.

In evaluating the educational aims of the Kuttab, one must remember the purpose of such an institution in a community like Silwa, and its aims in Egyptian society in general during the eighteenth century for instance. The present Kuttab in Silwa fulfills the task demanded of it by the people in maintaining the standards of Islamic learning in which the memorizing of the Koran comes first and foremost. Indeed, the religious and moral ideals of Islam have determined the scope of Islamic education. For the Greeks, education was part of politics, for the Moslems it is part of a comprehensive system of theology. For the latter the object of education is the salvation of the soul and not the control of nature and society.[1]

To expect the Kuttabs to prepare children for practical life or to teach them arithmetic, drawing, or rhythmic movements, according to some of the modern critics of these institutions, is to assume modern standards and social demands in a society which by its very organization does not require its schools to provide such activities. This is the task of the parents, and is to be learnt through life itself. It must be emphasized here that children are sent to the Kuttab voluntarily and they themselves are not averse to attending it to learn part of the Koran. Indeed, the alternative is for the children to work hard in the fields. The Kuttab Sheikhs are fully aware of the drawbacks of the educational system in the village at present. They see that the learning of the Koran by the children is interrupted by compulsory schooling, that parents do not leave their children undisturbed in the Kuttabs but frequently withdraw them to help at home or in the fields. They also complain that fewer boys remain in the Kuttab to go through the Koran again, after they finish the first time, and thus they forget it quickly. Nevertheless, in spite of what one may say of the Kuttab, it is evident from the opinions of the villagers that one cannot ignore the strength of the religious motive that renders this educational institution an integral part of the community. Practically every family in the village with more than two sons would like, as an ideal, to dedicate one of them 'to the cause of knowledge' (Ilm). Moreover, one notices that it is usually the younger brothers who attend the Kuttab, as the older brothers are more often needed for father's aid in farm work. Yet it is not unusual to hear of a man taking a vow to send his first son to the Kuttab, for this means an economic sacrifice for the sake of 'baraka', emanating from learning the Koran. Sending the youngest boy to the Kuttab is considered as a way of showing parental affection for the last born, by sparing him the arduous tasks of working in the fields. Blind boys find in the Kuttab a place where they can absorb themselves in learning the Koran, and it is mostly these blind boys who remain in

[1] See for example the writings of Al-Ghazali, *Ayo-alum-iddin* (Boulak, 1872); Az-Zarnuji, *Ta 'im al Muta'allim Wa Tariqat at-ta 'allum* (translated by C. E. von Grunebaum and Theodora M. Abel, New York, 1947).

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Chapter Eleven

EDUCATION AND SOCIAL CHANGE

After reviewing the indigenous aims and methods of learning and teaching, we turn now to the modern system of schooling which has affected the village as a result of the national educational policy. This type of schooling is represented in the two schools of the village, the compulsory and the primary school.

The compulsory school was established by the Provincial Council in 1925. In discussing the village compulsory school one must inevitably touch on educational problems at the national level. Compulsory schools were established to meet the long-felt need for mass literacy. The 'Egyptian Constitution' promulgated in 1923, declared in Article 19 that elementary education should be free and compulsory for all boys and girls. Accordingly the Ministry of Education planned to put this article into effect. The Ministry's scheme rejected the Kuttab as completely inadequate to cope with the problems of illiteracy, and of no educational value. Hence, new schools, called 'compulsory schools', had to be established. The period of compulsory education was to be for five years (from seven to twelve years old) on a half-day basis. The object of this programme was to benefit the maximum number of boys and girls. The time limit for completing the programme of compulsory education by providing a place for every child and thus abolishing illiteracy was fixed as fifteen years, and was extended later to twenty years.[1] The scheme was based on the participation of the Provincial Councils with the Ministry of Education, the former to be responsible for the sites, buildings, furniture and equipment; the latter for the staffing and administration. In 1933, owing to the difficulties entailed in the previous programme, a new education bill was passed to enforce attendance between the ages of seven and twelve, thus reducing the period to five years instead of six, and still on the half-day basis. Only those who suffer from physical or mental diseases, or those who live more than two kilometres from the nearest school, are exempt. The law also stipulates that the child's parents or guardians are responsible for his education in a compulsory school, if he is not receiving education else-

[1] Al-Kabbani, *Siasat al-T'alim fi Misr*, Cairo, 1945, pp. 9–10 (Arabic).

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drawing. In towns where there are kindergartens, children who completed the three years of the kindergarten are admitted without any examination. While the elementary school has always been free, the primary school only became free since 1943. The enthusiasm for the primary school in contrast to the blind alley of the elementary school, is that it leads to secondary schools and higher education.

In 1948 an Education Act was passed for the unification of the elementary and primary school to provide a common school for all. The ideal implied in the Act is to bring the curriculum and equipment of the elementary school up to the level of the primary school, with the exception of keeping a foreign language in the third and fourth years of the latter, while the former would give more instruction in Arabic and religion. Both schools would thus lead to secondary education.

The purpose of the modern system of education, primary, secondary and higher education, as envisaged by Muhammad Ali during the first half of the nineteenth century, was to train civil servants. The national policy of education, and consequently the people themselves, has connected this type of education with government service. From that point of view, the more children who attended the school the better, thereby providing wider scope of selection of employees for the government administration. The more children went to such schools, the less they received in return. As supply overtook demand, competition forced up the requirements for government jobs and lowered the economic value of certificates and degrees. In the second half of the nineteenth century, for example, a primary school certificate was sufficient qualification for a government job; later candidates for the same job were obliged to produce a secondary school certificate, and later even university graduates failed to find remunerative work.

In spite of all this, the appeal of such schools and institutions leading, not to the 'white collar' jobs in general as in the West, but particularly to government posts, cannot be exaggerated. Mann's observation in this respect still holds: 'In no other country in the world perhaps do the professional classes and especially the civil servants enjoy such widespread prestige and admiration. Hence inevitably the enthusiasm of Egyptian parents flows irresistibly into the channels of superior education, secondary or higher. The result is that there is a continual over-pressure on the accommodation of primary and secondary schools and the higher colleges, and public opinion persistently demands a further expansion of facilities at a time when the gravest doubts have arisen in the minds of the competent authorities whether a supply of professionally trained men is not being annually produced far larger than the country can ever hope to absorb.'[1]

This research had been conducted before the establishment of the primary school in Silwa, and thus may serve as a base line for the effect of such an education on the village life. From information received, the

[1] F. O. Mann, 'Education in Egypt', *Year Book of Education*, 1932, p. 991.

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212 This improvement is also obvious in Silwa itself: ten years ago there were two public scribes in the village to whom people would resort for letter-writing or making formal complaints, but they have had to close their establishment on not finding enough customers. The spread of literacy in Egypt has generally been made more difficult because of the difference between the colloquial and the classical Arabic, which is taught [197] in schools. The relation of the former to the latter is almost like that of Swiss German to High German. Moreover, some reformers maintain that it takes too long with the present script for the child to become sufficiently literate, and this difficulty has prompted some Egyptian scholars to advocate a Latin script instead of the present Arab script.[1] The numerous rules of inflection, changing vowels and consonants, and the diacritical marks attached to the words according to meaning, make correct reading a tiresome task. It has often been said, and not without some measure of justification, that in European languages, one has to read in order to understand, while in Arabic, one has to understand in order to read.

212 In Silwa, however, though people are increasingly attaching more importance to the ability to read and write, this instrument cannot be ● 871 considered as a vital motivating force in their lives. The villagers' traditions can be mainly communicated orally, with a few literate persons on whom would devolve the responsibility of communicating the cultural and religious aspects requiring literacy. It is not surprising, then, that some of the villagers, especially most women, who had learnt reading and writing at a compulsory school, have almost relapsed into illiteracy. The remoteness and relative isolation of the village, along with the poverty in cultural influences such as newspapers, books, and other suitable reading [004] material, explain to a great extent this phenomenon. The degree of literacy could be better assessed, however, from the kind of literature that is read in the village, and from the extent to which the reading ability is utilized. There are hardly any books in the village, except those few related to religious matters in one way or another. The following is a list of all the books which are acquired and read by the villagers:

Books on Jurisprudence (fikh): *Mata Assafti, al-Ishnawi, Sheik abu-al Hasan, mata Addardiri, Risalat Ibn abi-Zaid al-Kairawani, Azzurkani.*

Burdat-al-Busiri (The Mantle Ode), a hymn in praise of the Prophet.

Dalail al-Kheirat. A book read usually for propitiation, and in petitions to God.

Mata al-Jamhara in Divinity (Tawheed—Unity of God).

Manakib Assalihun (The Virtue of Pious Men).

Mankib al-Hassan wal-Hussain (The Virtues of the Prophet's Cousins).

Manakib Asseyid al-Badawi.

Kasaid ahl Attarik (Poems of the Mystics).

Certain books from which texts of charms are copied.

Mawlid al-Manawi (Prophet's Life-story).

[1] A. F. Fahmy, *Latin Script for the Writing of Arabic* (Arabic), Cairo, 1944.

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Maulid Salma (Prophet's Life-story).

These books are usually obtained from an itinerary vendor, who occasionally visits the village. Amongst those who own books, three persons actually possess the bulk of the books found in the village: they are the Sheikh of the recognized 'Kuttab', a village school teacher, and an ambitious young man who owns a shop in the village at present, after having spent more than ten years in Cairo and Alexandria. Yet perhaps none of these people possess more than a dozen books.

As to the spread of the newspapers, there are ten persons in this community of over three thousand people who buy newspapers, although not regularly. They get them from a distributor travelling by local train. Three of the newspaper buyers are shopkeepers, while two others are teachers in the compulsory school. News naturally infiltrates to a large extent through reading aloud the news in the village gatherings, or through borrowing the newspapers. Up to 1951 there was no radio set in the village and, of course, no cinema, thus contact with the outside world, as far as these aids are concerned, was entirely absent.

The extent of literacy in this community could also be expressed in the number of people who have been to any school other than those educational institutions existing in the village (before the establishment of the primary school in the village). The following is a list enumerating all the boys and men who are receiving some kind of education outside the village:[1]

Nine boys in the primary school in Aswan (under 12 years old).

One boy in the secondary school in Aswan (14 years old).

Six boys in the Training College for Elementary Teachers in Aswan.

Two elementary school teachers who are actually teaching in the village compulsory school.

One higher education.

In analysing these educated people from the village, it is important to show the various incentives for their education. Four of those in the primary school and the elementary training college are cousins: the father of two of them is an Azharite and a teacher at the village school, and it is not surprising that he should send his two sons to school in Aswan. Two years ago, however, his younger brother quarrelled with him, and decided to vie with him at every turn, even in sending two of his sons to the same schools as those of his brother. Two of the other boys are sons of a relatively well-off woman who forced her husband to divorce her. She then married a younger man, and managed to keep her two sons under her custody by sending them to school and personally bearing the expenses incurred by their education in Aswan, as the father himself could not do so. One of the boys in the primary school in Aswan is the son of a blind man who possesses practically no land and on receiving aid (£E2 a month) for his disability from the Ministry of Endowment, decided to send his son to school.

[1] There are no village girls at all who have received or are receiving education outside the village compulsory school.

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One of the boys in the elementary training college is an uncle of another boy in the primary school, to which the latter was sent after his mother quarrelled with his grandmother and decided to live in a separate house. To assert her independence and prestige, she also decided to send her son to receive education in Aswan like his maternal uncle.

Here it is obvious that apart from the benefits that may be gained from such an education outside the village school, the impulse of emulation and rivalry, especially amongst kinsfolk, must be regarded as one of the strong forces that led some of these boys to be sent to school in Aswan. Moreover, except in the case of three boys, they are by no means the sons of the comparatively well-to-do people in the village. In fact, neither the Omda nor the village Sheikhs have any sons at school in Aswan.

The writer concludes this chapter with certain reflections concerning the function of modern education and the process of social change in Egypt. Many critics of this system have noted, with alarm, that the schools as they stand have outlived their function of producing government officials. The bureaucracy of the administrative machinery is already loaded. Out of a total expenditure of £43,558,884 in 1940–1, the salaries and wages of government civil servants and employees amounted to £15,799,001 or about 30 per cent; the corresponding figures for 1944 were £82,097,005 and £23,495,275 or over 20 per cent of the total State expenditure.[1]

Moreover, the effect of modern schooling is usually the alienation of the best boys in rural societies from their background, since they are only to be satisfied with a government post. One wonders what would happen to the economic productivity of the country if the expansion of education were envisaged purely in terms of the content of modern schooling.[2] The liability of the modern school products has been felt, and the irrelevance of their education has been criticized by many educationists and reformers.[3] It has been rightly stated that 'any programme for change should assess the part the school can play. For too often the school is a means of weaning the brightest boys and girls away from their local communities, when it should be more concerned with directing awakened interest to improve local conditions.'[4] As in the indigenous education of the village under study, education for social change must also take into account both the technical and the cultural aspects, and schools must

[1] *Annuaire Statistique de Poche* for 1946, p. 234.

[2] The average wheat yield in Egypt is 1,700 lb. per acre, nearly as high as that of Great Britain; corn gives the highest yield per acre in the world, while cotton, the principal export crop, yields an average of 606 lb. per acre compared with 328 in U.S. and 368 in the Soviet Union. Doreen Warriner, *Land and Poverty in the Middle East*, London, 1948.

[3] Ministry of Education, *Report on Secondary Education*, Cairo, 1935. *Report on Educational Reform in Egypt*, Cairo, 1949.

[4] *Experiences with Human Factors in Agricultural Areas of the World*. Extension Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture, 1949.

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public school product, Cromer, for instance, was naturally dominated by 'the Whig tradition from which he could never unfortunately escape'.[1]

Neither in the indigenous way of training as seen in the earlier chapters nor in the literate climate of opinion in Egypt before its cultural contacts with the West, is there any distinction between vocational and liberal education. A literate man was not necessarily a person who could read and write, but one who had received moral and religious instruction, enabling him to lead the 'Good Life'. Moreover 'literate and illiterate' corresponded to 'employed and unemployed'.[2] From the writings of Ibn Taimiyah, one of the Moslem thinkers of the thirteenth century, there seems to be no distinction between education and vocation. He maintained that a vocation was one of the compulsory sciences which the community considered necessary to impart to its members. The duty of 'al-muhtasib' (the market inspector in Islamic institutions) besides inspecting the markets and the tradesmen, was to inspect the schools.

The distinction between 'culture' and 'utility' is not an intrinsic one and is based in the West on a view of a social order where human beings are divided into those who are capable of a life of intellectual pursuit and those who have to work to provide them with the necessary leisure for that pursuit.[3] Such a view has vitiated educational theory and practice for a considerable time and brought about the dualism of liberal and vocational education.[4]

[1] Lord Lloyd, *Egypt Since Cromer*, Vol. I, London, 1933, p. 161. See also S. I. Hammad, 'French and British Influences in Egyptian Education', M.A. Thesis, London, 1949 (unpublished).

[2] A. al-Jabarti, *'Ajaib al-Athar*, Vol. II, Cairo A.H., 1322, p. 214 (Arabic).

[3] John Dewey, *Democracy and Education*, London (1947 ed.), p. 294. See also Herbert Read, *To Hell with Culture*, London, 1941. Lancelot Hogben, *Political Arithmetic*, London, 1938; *Dangerous Thoughts*, London, 1939.

[4] For a defence of pursuing knowledge for its own sake and for liberal education see Abraham Flexner, *Universities: American, English and German*, Oxford University Press, 1930. For an opposite view see Council for Curriculum Reform, *The Content of Education*, London, 1948.

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REFLECTIONS AND CONCLUSIONS

as other anthropologists, have viewed the efficacy of modern education in schools, and the problems that face the adolescent in the modern complex society. They have pointed out the gaps in modern education in the transmission of the cultural heritage, especially at the stage of adolescence, when transition from childhood dependence to adult independence is expected to take place.[1]

As far as Silwa is concerned, it has been shown how the child-training practices impress on the growing individual the social norms with certain dominant themes at different stages. It has also been noted that the child-training system reflects many of the social and psychological attitudes of adult behaviour. Attempts have been made throughout this work to discern some correlations between adult values and personality structure, and techniques of instilling children with 'adab'. Children begin to adopt some of the cultural values of the community even during childhood, e.g. assertive, aggressive, and rivalry attitudes towards other children, while there is submissive and obedient behaviour towards elders; observance of sex regulations and behaviour before puberty; the earlier attainment by girls of sociological maturity, and so on. It was also pointed out from observations, tests, dreams and Rorschach responses, that the children's flights of imagination are curbed at an early stage, thus making the children show striking interest in adult activities of farming, ceremonial celebrations, and kinship relations. The policy of child-training in Silwa sets the pattern of the social relations of individuals in their groupings, and incorporates them as well in the productive activities of the community.

Against such a background of the cultural tradition, one can draw certain conclusions. One can see the contributions that an educational institution may make in the social and economic life of a community. One can ascertain the difficulties encountered in its proper functioning. Furthermore, one can view in proper perspective the complex process which children undergo in adjusting themselves to school curriculum and its values on one hand and to the prevailing conditions of home training on the other.

Many educational thinkers have emphasized the importance of relating the school to the needs of the community. In this connection it is often assumed that elements in the educational content of a community could be transferred easily with benefit to the school curricula, providing stimulation, and provoking the interest of the learners. Such assumptions often ignore the new situation which has arisen out of the cultural contacts. Those who are thinking in such ways wishfully hope to recreate the past; but in their zeal they tend to ignore the basis of the community's educative forces.[2] In this community, for example, the inclusion in a reading book of some of the local fairy tales, or the inclusion of some of the children's games in the school, would be considered facetious and undignified by

[1] Margaret Mead, *Growing Up in New Guinea*.
[2] See M. Read, review of Gladwyn M. Childs' book referred to earlier.

1: Ammar E, 1-5 (1951) 1954
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both children and adults. A faith in the practical subjects and in their educative value would be met with reticence in such a community. For such practical skills are considered to be of lower social status than farming; they are judged to be subjects unsuitable for inclusion in the school programme, as their acquisition occurs as a by-product of observation and routine.

Studies of this type based on the functional approach towards the place of the school in its social setting are proving to be valuable guides to educational reconstruction. They also provide a buffer through their pragmatic analysis, against the various winds of educational doctrine which sometimes beat upon educational theory and practice with the force of a gale.

Sociological studies have also contributed to the modification of many generalizations about the social and psychological development of *the* child or *the* adolescent. It is becoming increasingly apparent that no study can make sweeping generalizations about the child or the adolescent, as we have always to ask questions about the conditioning factors, e.g. the home and environmental background; or, in a modern community, the class to which the child belongs. An American sociologist maintains that in American education, 'the ineffectiveness of middle-class sanctions upon the great masses of lower-class children is the crucial dilemma of our thoroughly middle-class teachers and school systems. Thus lower-class children remain "unsocialized" and "unmotivated" from the middle-class point of view.'[1]

If one talks in general terms about the development of children's imagination, the stages when they become capable of responding to authority, or of assuming responsibility, and about the conflicts of personal adjustment, he is denying the conditioning effect of social forces which play a potent part in the quality of the individual's development and in his social adjustment. Adult attitudes and expectations must be taken into consideration. It has been shown in this study how, in Silwa as among the Manus, children are almost completely deprived of imaginative potentialities and are very matter-of-fact at a very early stage. Children do not tinker with adult themes of life in their play as preparation for their future life.

To expect that certain characteristics of child development are absolute, irrespective of the adult world, would be to ignore the strength of the cultural tradition.[2] The study of the 'psychology of child development' must be contingent on that of the 'sociology of child development'.[3] The Committee on Human Development of the University of Chicago main-

[1] Allison Davis and Robert Havighurst, 'Social Class and Colour Differences in Child-Rearing', in *Personality in Nature Society and Culture*, p. 263. See also their book, *Father of the Man*, Boston, 1947, pp. 10–11.

[2] M. Mead, *Growing Up*, pp. 267–8.

[3] An interesting example of research in the sociology of child development is a field study of social influence in groups of children by R. Lippitt, N. Polansky and S. Rosen, 'The Dynamics of Power', in *Human Relations*, Vol. V, No. 1, 1952.

3: Ayrout M-5 (ca. 1935) 1945
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The Ministry of Public Works controls the irrigation of all cultivated land, settles the rotation of crops for each zone, watches over the embankments and canals, and, if the Nile threatens to break its banks, recruits the fellaheen necessary for their maintenance. 656

The Ministry of Agriculture regulates the acreage of cotton and rice, distributes and controls the selection of cotton seed, and levies the fellaheen needed to fight the boll worm or the locust.

The Ministry of Finance collects the land-tax through its *sarrafs* in each district, issues orders for seizures, buys cotton to maintain equilibrium in the home market, and by means of the *Crédit Agricole* attempts to systematise the finances of the fellah. 651 656 657

The Ministries of Education and Public Health oblige the fellah to improve his mind and his physique. 871

The Ministry of Justice, through the district courts, — and after agelong delays — condemns or acquits him. 692

The Ministry of National Defence arranges for his enlistment, or collects the exemption fine. 702

The Ministry of the Interior, acting in the common interest, supports all this network of regulations and so ensures order and public security. 656

The Government system in its present form is less than a century old. It was established by Mohammed Aly, and has changed little in its working since. He did not so much create the machinery which deals with the fellah as systematise it after the disastrous and arbitrary rule of the Turks and Mamelukes. The founder of the reigning House thus raised over the heads of the fellaheen a system of law and order which makes it possible for them, if not to progress, at least to live. 175 64

Let us examine this hierarchy from top to bottom, and consider the relations of each authority with the fellah.

First of all comes the King. The last two sovereigns (not to mention others) have sincerely desired the well-being of the fellah, and frequently given proof of this desire. Their Ministers, however, are often more occupied with politics than with government, and travel far more in Europe than in the 643 645

donkey to the fields and the *gamoosa* to the canal, where he climbs on its back and sets it turning the *saqia*. The child learns how to cry out, how to chase off thieving birds with stones, how to pick and even plant cotton. He does not lack amusement, for he has plenty of companions. During the day, when the men are toiling in the fields and the women are busy in the house or by the canal, the whole village belongs to the children. It is they whom a visitor sees first. They paddle stark naked in the pond, and learn to swim. They have bulging bellies, for they eat anything and everything. They play in the dust, spinning an onion as a top, hopping on one leg and holding the other heel with their hands, or shooting with a catapult (*nibla*) at date-palms or birds. When they are a little older they play at *siga*, a kind of marble game with small pebbles which have to be moved into forty-nine holes made in the sand.

At about the age of seven the young fellah is circumcised, and thus introduced into the world of men. At this stage he has to go to the elementary school (*ilzamiya*), at least in the mornings. His parents are bound to send him, under pain of a fine of twenty piastres, or fifty for a second offence. 95% of the fellaheen are illiterate, and the Government wishes to wipe out this disgrace from the next generation. The 1923 Constitution decreed that education should be compulsory, but it is only since 1935 that this order has begun to take effect. Schools are being established all over the countryside. Gradually sites are being found in the villages, schools set up, and teachers appointed. Every year, places that within living memory had never seen a teacher are provided with a complete teaching staff. In 1946 there should be 4,600 free elementary schools, and the whole child population will be receiving instruction (41).

The parents do not understand these new ideas. Though accustomed to other tyrannical institutions, they do not resign themselves to this. Some Upper Egyptians of 'Ezbet Balkan, who had been fined for not sending their children to the compulsory Government school, attacked the teachers and wounded them. The peasants care little for education. They only want their children to help them to increase their earnings. Moreover, most villages are still served, according to the ancient system, by a *kuttab*, in which a blind teacher, seated on the ground, gathers a few children round him and teaches them the Koran.

857 [524] 852 872 656 [212] 177 871 183 579 871 794

871 His methods are by no means arduous. Two or three
794 hours a day, six months a year, and in three years the fellah children, helped by the stick, will know a good many *suras* by heart. For his pains the *fiqih* or teacher receives two loaves of bread, or one piastre, a week for each pupil.

872 Nowadays even the girls must go to school, but their
562 turn comes in the afternoon. In the morning they help their mothers and fetch in the water, trying their best to
[482] balance on their heads the little *ballas* which is given them.
857 When they grow up they will be able to carry seven gallons of water in this way. They are also made to gather dung, bird-droppings, and any other refuse which may be useful in the house or the field. They make fuel cakes (*gilla*) by
[372] taking a little mud, some chopped straw and a quantity of dung, which they knead into a paste with their hands and feet, and then take lumps of, to flatten into cakes about eight inches across. These are spread out on the ground to dry in the sun, or stuck on the wall. When thoroughly dry they are piled up on the roof. These dung-cakes are the fellah's coal; they are an essentially agricultural form of fuel, used wherever wood and money are lacking, for example in China and in several parts of France.

524 The girls have rag dolls to play with, but more often,
857 up to the age of about twelve, they join with the boys in both work and play. Occasionally, from the age of eight
[464] until they get married, they go into service in middle-class homes.

857 These children are ignorant and to all appearance neg-
593 lected. They live in a herd and seem to have no patronymics. But it would be wrong to infer from this that they are of no concern to their parents, and belong to the community at large. On the contrary their parents love them passionately, far more than they love each other. Children are never put
[736] up for sale here as they are in China, and there is no need for orphanages. Parental sensitiveness is a frequent cause of quarrels among both men and women. If a teacher hits or
861 ill-treats their child they are up in arms immediately to
871 remove him from school and take a brutal vengeance. This does not, however, stop them from using blows and insults to 'educate' their children themselves.

593 The children are also very much attached to both their parents. This attachment seems to be rooted in their

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and new Faculties and Departments have been created. In 1942 a second University was founded, at Alexandria. The Government's primary and secondary schools count their pupils by hundreds of thousands, and are endowed with all the latest improvements. Then there are numerous private schools of older foundation. Even the ancient Moslem University of Al-Azhar has felt the wind of reform, and has established new branches, the Institutes of Shubra, Tanta, Assiut, and Qena. Three thousand teachers are busy with elementary education in the villages. Egyptian publications, whether newspapers, reviews, or books, compare in style and content with the best in Europe, and are a model for all the Arabic-speaking countries. Yet the most important newspaper, *Al-Ahram*, the *Times* of the Near East, has a daily circulation of not more than 100,000, and the farmers' review, *Zamil el-Fellah*, which is published by the Ministry of Agriculture and distributed free, prints only 48,000 copies.

The scientists, scholars, and men of letters who come to Egypt every year for congresses or conferences find in Cairo or Alexandria audiences as eager and open-minded as those of Paris. They are astonished and say so.

Thinkers and students are busy creating a national language, a national music, a national theatre and cinema, something which shall be specifically Egyptian, and not just vaguely Islamic. It is very interesting to follow this development of culture. But we must turn aside to see what is happening below.

Have the masses been caught up in this tide of renewal? Are they following the élite of the cities? The answer is: either not at all or at such a distance that no movement is discernible. Illiteracy still prevails among an overwhelming majority. The latest statistics have had to recognise it. (") It may be that the fault lies with the English, who developed everything in Egypt except education; with the fellaheen themselves, who are not very gifted and show no eagerness to learn; or with a syllabus ill-adapted to their mentality and forced upon them with compulsory education. Whatever the cause the fact remains that 95% of the fellaheen can neither read nor write. Even if they know how to read, they remain strangers to all interchange of

3: Ayrout M-5 (ca. 1935) 1945
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The first and most urgent need, let it be said again, is education. /183

"It is my opinion that every reform which is not founded on the education of the people is destined to fail, or at least to take a very long time—and the people's time is precious. /185 /203

"Nothing will ever come of building model villages, or of using the cinema and the wireless to give advice on health and social matters, unless the people are educated and enabled to make use of all these things." (Article in Al-Mussawar No. 800 by 'Abdel-Qader Hamza Pasha, Senator, 1940.)

Many influential people, however, sincerely believe that to educate the fellah would be to make him unhappy, and that his present state of insensibility and habituation is best for him. He does not suffer so much as one might think, for he does not know what he lacks. To teach him would mean to waken in him demands for comfort and amusement which he could not satisfy, and which would give him a distaste for work on the land. Then what would become of Egypt ? In 1933 a Member of Parliament maintained that the education of the masses was undesirable, and suicidal for Egypt. Many large landowners think the same. /183 /185 /871

This may well be so, if by education is meant the wholly unsuitable programme to be found in the official syllabus of compulsory education. There is no sense in teaching the fellah practices which are useless in the country-side, and are based on purely Western ideas. "This teaching does not give results in proportion to its cost. The Commission therefore advises a radical reorganisation based on a recognition of the need to prepare the young for country life, so as to raise the standard of agricultural production" (''). As for the fellah's distaste for the farm's driving him to the city, this movement comes more from continual poverty than from such teaching. The fellah migrates to the town only because he hopes to earn enough there to enable him to return to the land. /166

It must be said that no depopulation of the countryside has yet been noted. The 1937 census shows a stationary figure for the rural population, in spite of the increased birth rate and the relative decrease of mortality. On the other hand, in the less illiterate villages, and among fellaheen who have returned after a long stay in the city — poorer /162 /166 /184